

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 2, 4th Waxing of Kason 1380 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Wednesday, 18 April 2018

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar New Year Greetings of President U Win Myint

(ME 1380, 1ST Day of New Year)

Dear esteemed citizens, on this auspicious occasion of the New Year, I send you all, greetings and good wishes to be blessed with good health and happiness.

Dear esteemed citizens,

The priority goals of our Union Government have already been declared on 30th March, the day on which I took my oath of office as President. On this matter, I have heard that the expectations of our citizens have become high and they are also quite eager to know how these goals would be met. At this opportune time

I will present an explanation to our esteemed citizens.

In our efforts to tighten management controls over departments that are lagging behind in reform, these departments will have to implement the development policies of our Union Government in accordance with priority. Out of the three basic needs of our citizens which are “food, clothing and shelter”, it has been found that housing for the people is a vital need. We have also noticed the sufferings of our people who have to live in make-shift shelters because they do not have a place to live. Among our civil service personnel who are still in

active service, there are some who do not have proper housing. I have also noticed that a great number of civil service personnel after retirement are suffering greatly because they do not have housing. That is why our Union Government will work hard on a priority basis so that civil service personnel will have at least a house or an apartment and live in dignity by the time they retire. During the two year term of our Union Government, we have already built (4627) housing units for public service personnel in States and Regions.

SEE PAGE-5



New Year Paritta Recitation Ceremony held

The Paritta Recitation Ceremony for the 1380 Myanmar Era was held at Ngushwewar Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were present at the event to listen to the Paritta recitation. **PHOTO: MNA (ARTICLE ON PAGE-3)**



Pyithu Hluttaw holds Paritta reciting ceremony

A PARITTA reciting ceremony was held at the meeting hall of the Pyithu Hluttaw building C, Nay Pyi Taw, in the afternoon on Myanmar's New Year day of 1380 ME.

Members of the Sangha, led by Sayadaw Bhaddanta Tejobhassa of Yazathari Tharmanaykyaw Monastery, Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, attended the ceremony to recite the Paritta.

At the ceremony, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat attended the ceremony. The congregation first received the five precepts administered by the Sayadaw. Later, the Sangha led by the Sayadaw recited the Parittas.

Following this, the audience donated alms and offertories to the monks and shared the merit gained.



The congregation attend the Paritta reciting ceremony at Pyithu Hluttaw Office. **PHOTO: MNA**

Also present at the New Year Paritta reciting ceremony organised by the Pyithu Hluttaw were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Aung @ U Tun Hein, staff of the Pyithu

Hluttaw office and their family members.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker pays respects to elderly in Myawady

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than who was in Kayin State, Myawady Town, attended a ceremony yesterday to release fish fingerlings as Jivitadana donation and later paid respects to the elderly.

The Myawady District Jivitadana fish release ceremony was held in the morning near Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge over the Thaungyin River, during which the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and wife, the Hluttaw representatives, departmental officials, and religious and social organisations released fish fingerlings into the river.

Next, the Speaker and the delegation visited the Shwe Myin Won pagoda trustee office in Myawady Town, where healthcare services were be-

ing provided to the elderly. The Speaker then attended the ceremony to pay respects to the elderly and donated cash and kind.

On behalf of the elders, 87-year-old U Tin Maung from No. 2 Ward delivered the word of thanks.

Following this, the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker cordially greeted the elderly. The day's ceremony to pay respects was held for 202 persons aged above 85 in Myawady Town.

The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and officials also attended a tree-planting ceremony in the compound of Deik Htan Aung Pagoda in No. 3 Ward and planted several varieties of tree saplings, including teak, padauk and mahogany, among others. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than greeting elderly person aged above 85 in Myawady Township. **PHOTO: MNA**

Rakhine traditional ceremony to pay respects to elders held on 17 April

THE 54th all Sittway Rakhine traditional ceremony of paying respects to elders took place at the U Oattama Hall, Sittway Township, on 17 April.

The ceremony was jointly organised by the committee for holding the Rakhine State traditional Thingyan festival and the committee for holding the Sittway Rakhine traditional ceremony for paying respects to elders.

First, the congregation led by Rakhine State Chief

Minister U Nyi Pu, ministers and other officials from the department concerned paid their respects to the elderly.

Next, U San Thar Maung, chairman of the organising committee, explained the purpose of the ceremony.

The Chief Minister and other ministers, the members of the ceremony organising committee and other donors distributed cash, medicines and other necessities to the elderly in each ward in Rakhine

State.

The committee for the all Sittway Rakhine traditional ceremony of paying respects to elders visited some 135 elderly people aged 80 and above in the wards in Sittway town and paid their respects.

Also Present at the ceremony were State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, State Ministers and their wives, State Advocate General, officials and members of Rakhine Culture organisations.—Tin Tun (IPRD) ■



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu donates offertories to an elderly person at the 54th all Sittway Rakhine traditional ceremony to pay respects to elders in Sittway. **PHOTO: MNA**

“ We have much to carry on fulfilling the hopes and needs of the people of the country. We must press on until our citizens have their dignity raised and our country can retain its former glory on the global stage.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)

“ May we all be able to build the peaceful, modern, prosperous and genuine Democratic Federal Republic which is the dream of the fathers of our independence and which is what our people desire.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

New Year Paritta Recitation Ceremony held at Presidential Palace

The Paritta Recitation Ceremony for the 1380 Myanmar Era was held at Ngushwewar Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were present at the event to listen to the Paritta recitation.

Sanghas led by Pyinmana Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara attended the ceremony and recited the Parittas.

Also present at the ceremony were Vice President U Myint Swe and wife, Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat and wife, Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Chairman of the

Kings, governments and presidents must follow the 10 point Code of Conduct for Kings. In short, it will help provide sufficient seeds to the farmers, provide capital to the merchants and pay or provide regularly to government servants. If these three things are done, the country will develop. The Sayadaw concluded his New Year sermon by urging the audience to start with the three practices.

Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein and wife, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy

Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and wife, other Union Ministers and their wives, the Union Attorney-General and wife, Chairman of Union Civil Service Board and wife, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and wife, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and wife, the Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) and wife, senior Tatmad-

aw officers from the Commander-in-Chief's office, Deputy Ministers, invited guests and other officials.

President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the guests in attendance took the Nine Precepts from the Pyinmana Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw.

Next, the Sayadaw and sanghas recited the Parittas and the President and his congregation listened to the Parittas. The President and wife, the State Counsellor and the congregation donated offertories to the members of the sangha.

In his sermon delivered to the audience for the offerings and donations made, Pyinmana



Vice President U Myint Swe and wife donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara mentioned Pakokku Sayadaw's guidance on praying three times a day; in the morning, noon and in the evening. As such, all are advised to pray and share merit. Doing this reduces anger and without anger, all can live, sleep, eat and work well for the country, he said.

Kings, governments and presidents must follow the 10 point Code of Conduct for Kings. In short, it will help provide sufficient seeds to the farmers, provide capital to the merchants and pay or provide regularly to gov-

ernment servants. If these three things are done, the country will develop. The Sayadaw concluded his New Year sermon by urging the audience to start with the three practices. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the audience listened to the sermon and then shared merits by pouring the water of libation.

After the ceremony, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the audience offered meals to the members of the Sangha.—Myanmar News Agency ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe,
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR**Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@gmail.com**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw,
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/
globalnewlightofmyanmar**Write for us**We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Merit makers throng pagodas in Yangon on New Year's Day

By Yi Yi Myint &
Ohnmar Thant

TO celebrate the end of Myanmar Era (ME) 1379 and the start of 1380, merit makers thronged famous pagodas in Yangon.

The Shwedagon Pagoda trustee organised a donation of fruits, flowers, water, illuminated oil lamps and scented water at the platform of the pagoda at 5 a.m. yesterday. At 5.30 a.m., the pagoda's Ovadacariya (patron) sayadaws and invited sanghas were provided with breakfast "soon" at the Yaungdawpwin prayer hall. At 6 a.m. in the old Buddha images prayer hall, the audience listened to the recitation of Paritta by the pagoda's Ovadacariya

(patron) sayadaws and then shared merit by pouring water. At 8 a.m. at the Chanthargyi prayer hall in Rahu corner, the 32nd group blood donation ceremony was held. In the Maha Wizaya Pagoda located at the foot of Shwedagon Pagoda, devotees witnessed the sunrays shining directly on the Buddha image inside the pagoda exactly at 8:35 a.m. and 3:25 p.m. on New Year's Day. This event occurs twice a year only during this time on New Year's Day.

People keeping the Sabbath, merit makers and food donors were seen flocking to other famous pagodas of Yangon such as Sule Pagoda and Shwebonpwin Pagoda. Some private buses and cars provided free transport to the people.



After celebrating the Thingyan festival, people pay a visit to pagodas to welcome in the New Year of ME 1380. **PHOTO: MNA**

The reciting of Paritta by sanghas in the wards and streets of Yangon, organised by the locals staying there, was held, while other merit making such as caring for the personal

hygiene of the elderly, paying respects to the elders and the Jivatadana donation of releasing animals from harm or captivity was also observed at various locations. ■

Presidential pardon given to 8,490 prisoners on Myanmar New Year's Day

Eight-thousand, four-hundred and ninety prisoners received presidential pardons yesterday, among them eight political prisoners and one foreign prisoner in Insein Prison in Yangon.

As a humanitarian gesture for the Myanmar New Year, and for the peace of mind of the people, 8,490 prisoners serving jail terms in various correctional facilities across the country were given unconditional amnesty today under Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code, according to the presidential order released by the Office of the President yesterday.

Among the 336 prisoners who were released from Insein Prison were former members of the police and Tatmadaw, drug traffickers, and eight political prisoners included in the list of the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP). The one foreigner released was from China, officials said.

One of the released prisoners expressed his hope that others would be as fortunate.

"I got the long jail term. I am released today after staying in the prison for thirteen years," said Saw Walay, "I hope the remaining prisoners would be scrutinised



336 prisoners from the Insein Prison in Yangon were given amnesty yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

and released".

Among those receiving unconditional amnesty were 13 prisoners from Thaton prison,

178 from Myeik Prison and Correctional Facility, 64 from Dawei prison and 87 from Sittway prison.— Zaw Gyi ■

Crimes, accidents, fatalities and injuries during Thingyan Festival reduce this year

THE number of accidents and crimes that occurred during the 2018 Thingyan Festival from 13 to 16 April has reduced slightly this year.

In Nay Pyi Taw union territory, eight cases resulted in three deaths and two injuries. In Kachin State, there were four cases resulting in six deaths and two injuries. In Kayin State, there was one case resulting in

one injury, while in the Sagaing Region there were seven cases resulting in two deaths and 37 injuries.

In the Taninthayi Region, there were four cases resulting in one death and four injuries. In the Bago Region, there were five cases causing three deaths and four injuries. In the Magway Region, 14 cases resulted in two deaths and 22 injuries.

In the Mandalay region, there were 16 cases causing two deaths and 16 injuries. In Mon State, there was one death and 15 injuries caused by five cases, while two cases in Rakhine State resulted in four injuries. In the Yangon Region, there were nine cases causing three deaths and 19 injuries. Three cases in Shan State resulted in one death and seven injuries,

while six cases in the Ayeyawady Region resulted in two deaths and four injuries.

Although crimes and accidents occurred during the Thingyan Festival, the authorities were able to reduce crimes and accidents related to the Thingyan Festival through enhanced security, compared to the past years.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Myanmar New Year Greetings of President U Win Myint

FROM PAGE-1

In the remaining three years also, we have already made arrangements to build more than (7000) housing units for civil service personnel. In the remaining three years, by extending this Programme, (10,000) housing units will be built and sold for civil service personnel to be repaid in installments on a monthly basis. So that the salary scales of clerical staff and officers are in accord with the minimum daily wage Ks. 4800 of a worker, the Union Government has already made calculations and drawn up plans to increase the salary scales of all clerical staff by 20 per cent and that of all officers by 10 per cent. According to that calculation, the salary of a lowest level clerical staff will increase from Ks. 120,000 to Ks. 138,000 and the highest salary scale of an officer will increase from Ks. 500,000 to Ks. 550,000. Since the Union Government has made these arrangements for civil service personnel, they should be reminded that they also need to reciprocate by participating in the reform programmes of the Union Government by cooperating and accepting responsibilities.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy will produce 6000 MW in the coming three years by making an increase of 3000 MW from the current 3000 MW in its effort to increase electric power. In electric power distribution, in addition to the (230) KV line currently being used, another (500) KV line will be added within the next three years.

As for the Ministry of Construction, it will build (100) miles of new highways during the next year. From among the (200) miles of gravel roads, we will be turning these into tar roads or concrete roads. As for rural roads, we will be building about (600) miles of new rural roads. From among rural roads currently being used, we will be upgrading about (1000) miles of rural roads to tar or concrete roads. For smooth transportation and the safety of our citizens, we will be conducting detailed inspections and assessments of (29) suspension bridges all over the country within three months with the cooperation of foreign experts. From among these suspension bridges, those bridges which may pose danger will be repaired within six months in order of priority. In giving out loans to SME's (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises), a Credit Bureau will be established which can speed up the loan disbursement process and gather information regarding the credit worthiness of such enterprises. Permission to establish such a bureau will be given within one month.

To shore up and strengthen the judiciary sector, I have already met the Chief Justice of the Union and the Union Supreme Court judges, and have given necessary instructions to make sure that in all respective courts, judges at all levels are exercising proper supervisory functions with full accountability and responsibility. Our Union Law Support Association and Rule of Law Centers should cooperate actively in this regard. We need to strive for a judiciary branch that is impartial, independent and which balances fairness and judicious reasoning.

We need to ensure that in the face of the law all are equal and that things are done in accordance with the law.

In our efforts to combat corruption which has become customary and has taken root in most departments, with increased intensity it will be necessary to review the rights and responsibilities of government staff to ensure that there is a proper balance. Each department will have to take responsibility and respectively take action. The Anti-Corruption Commission, the Media and the People will have to weed out corrupt cases in a proper manner. It is very important to report cases of involvement by people with authority and their efforts to interfere, with accurate information and credible evidences. To intensify efforts to combat corruption, I have already urged the Anti-Corruption Commission to draw up an Action Plan and to exert more efforts in this endeavor.



President U Win Myint. PHOTO: MNA

Dear esteemed citizens,

To intensify our efforts to protect against human rights abuses, our Union Government will redouble our efforts in cooperation with CBO's (Community-based organizations) and CSO's (Civil Society Organizations), the Media and the People. The Human Rights Commission should endeavor to provide protection to ensure the legal basic rights of individuals, the fundamental rights of citizens and the freedom and security of citizens at interrogation centers, police station lock-ups, court detention rooms, jails, and hard labor prisoner camps, in fact, in all these places without discrimination. I have already met the Human Rights Commission members and have given instructions to ensure that citizens do not lose their inalienable rights, in other words their fundamental rights. The organizations themselves which are working in the area of human rights should take extra care not to trample upon the fundamental rights and dignity of any individual and to act fairly in accordance with the law.

To intensify our efforts to combat narcotic drugs, it is necessary to focus our attention on the large operators who are engaged in production, distribution and storage of these drugs. In cases where we have an individual who turns a blind eye or knowingly fail to take action, while narcotic and psychotropic drugs are being traded freely, we need to take action against the person who has primary responsibility. At the same time we need to take stringent action in cases where we lose track of the perpetrators, and cases of abandoned ownerless drugs. We need to give more authority to drug enforcement police officers and on the other hand we need to make the reward and punishment system more effective. If the situation requires, I will establish a Rapid Response Drug Enforcement Unit at the national level.

To prevent the wastage of public funds, to carry out proper management of projects and to estimate project costs as accurately as possible, it may be necessary to change the current habit of not using the allotted funds for submitted project budgets. For programmes which have huge financial outlays, we need to upgrade the capacity for project monitoring and evaluation. We will also need to take very harsh actions against officers at various levels who report fake project completion reports; failure to follow international procedures for inviting tenders; and cases where advantages are taken by using loopholes in tender invitation procedures. In this case, the Union Auditor-General and all Audit Committee established in all departments should be able to perform their duties without giving favor and without engaging in corrupt practices in strict compliance with the rules.

Dear esteemed citizens,

I will work for the return of farmlands confiscated illegally and to ensure that compensation has been given, in close consultation with various States/Regional governments based on the findings, remarks and opinions of different levels of committees, formed for the review of farmlands and other lands, which also include Hluttaw representatives. I will also work to ensure that confiscated

farmlands and garden lands which have been released are returned to their original owners. I will also work to ensure that in regard to confiscated farmlands and garden lands which have not yet been released, expeditious review is made by the various review committees in consultation with the States/Regional governments for the return of these released lands to the original owners.

In working for uplifting of the socio-economic life of farmers, I will work speedily and diligently for the farmers to get land ownership certificates in the entire country within one year. I will also work to ensure that agricultural loans are disbursed without delay in time for planting. Tax will not be collected on agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, pesticides and agricultural implements.

Priority will be given to drinking water, agriculture, electricity and roads.

To improve the life of workers, in the short term, we will have to strive to manage the workers social security fund effectively. To improve job opportunities within the country, we will invite foreign investments. We will also work to make sure that our workers in foreign countries are safe, and that they enjoy their rights. For this we will work with other countries based on bilateral agreements.

To enable students to pursue higher learning, we will work to raise the assistance provided. At the same time, we will focus and work towards having more students in the professional disciplines. Providing opportunities to students from low income families and poor families to pursue higher education will soon become an important policy for the State. We have to work to ensure that students with abilities get the opportunity to pursue the disciplines for which they qualify. To ensure they get the positions they deserve, we need to improve ways and means for them to study abroad or at home.

Dear esteemed citizens,

In future years, our Union Government in its march for reform needs to begin at the base level which is closest to the People, who are the original owners of sovereign power. We need to approach reform with the twin ideas of "together with the people" and "United strength". When we say "together with the people", it does not merely mean listening to the voices of the people. It means we have to build "United strength" by giving high regard to the wishes and opinions of the people.

In places where there is a mismatch in the reform process, we will need to replace with people who are qualified and can work expeditiously, if need be. Especially in view of the fact that we need to make preparations for the Federal Union administrative system, we will need to reduce central control and make changes where needed based on the suggestions and recommendations of the States and Regions.

In carrying out the above programs, the basic idea we need to follow is thus: "make reforms without hurting stability". I wish to submit that we need to work with the "United strength" of the Union Government, other branches of government, professionals, civil society organizations, the Media and the People. Especially, we need to work for the transition process based on the standards of transparency, openness, accountability and responsibility at all levels.

Dear esteemed citizens,

I will strive with heart and soul to bring forth the changes which are the aspirations of the people; make them see with their very eyes. In this New Year, if we all work with "United Strength", with renewed body and spirit, I am fully confident that we will reach our common goal and our common aim, very, very soon.

At this auspicious time of the Myanmar New Year, may all Union citizens have peace of mind; may the Union be blessed with Peace, Development and Prosperity. May all Union citizens participate in the building of the Democratic Federal Union, in whatever role they may be assigned. I conclude this speech with these good wishes.

Thank you all.

Nay Pyi Taw Council turning the city into a livable place without occurring any bad impact on the environment

By July Moe (Myanma Alinn)

The Nay Pyi Taw Council of the government in office is working with the goal of turning Nay Pyi Taw into a livable city which is also the centre of learning and research through environmental friendly means.

During its first year in office, the government spent over K 41 billion in implementing 1431 tasks to reach this end. The expenditure came from the funds allowed by the Union, funds allotted by the Pyidaungsu Huttaw and funds donated region-wise. In the second year, it implemented 1390 tasks at a cost of over K 42 billion.

The government is working to ensure agricultural

sector development, electricity supply, good transport, rural water supply, health care and infrastructures for the spread of education opportunities till reaching the rural areas, the rule of law, community peace, protection of legal rights for the development of Nay Pyi Taw while adopting the three work guidelines for urban development according to the policies.

Endeavours are being made for the progress of education, health, transport, agriculture, small and medium enterprises in fulfilling the basic needs. In many cases, transport is a key for regional development. Good transport facilitates commodity flow and trade, thus helping develop other sectors such as social,

economic and health fields.

Road and bridge building have been prioritized in rural areas. The newly developed towns have all the necessary infrastructure and facilities including power and water supply. The government is making all-out efforts for harmonious progress of wards and villages in Pinyinmana, Lewe and Tatkon townships which are included in the Nay Pyi Taw.

The old Yangon-Mandalay road passes through the Nay Pyi Taw for over 57 miles. The 24-ft wide road has been repaved and extended to become a 48-ft wide facility with smooth surface.

In the road and bridges sector, the government during its first year in office spent over Ks 12 billion in imple-



Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung. **PHOTO: MNA**



Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung and Chinese Ambassador Mr. Hong Lian inspect Thapyaygone market. **PHOTO: MNA**



Workers assemble a 200 KVA transformer for the Sub-power station-1 in Dakkhinathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. **FILE PHOTO**

menting 651 programs and spent over K 12 billion and implemented 361 programs in the second year. It is also building rural roads and bridges to narrow the gap between towns and villages.

Nay Pyi Taw has a population of one million and over 50 per cent is living in the rural areas where agriculture is the main livelihood. Nay Pyi Taw put over 0.16 million acres under monsoon paddy and produced over 14.3 million baskets at the per acre yield of 84 baskets. It has already put 25,900 acres under summer paddy. Private businesses are also taking part in growing monsoon and summer paddy in the council area and they are introducing high-yield and pest-resistant quality strains. Nay Pyi Taw will distribute quality strains and is launching pilot projects to test the new strains. The city is also extending the irrigation system. The government spent over Ks 8 billion in implementing 199 irrigation works during the first year and over spent K 10 billion implementing 413 works.

Under the World Bank loans and Agriculture Government Supporting Project, the city is promoting the irrigation system by spending nearly K 3.4 billion. The project will irrigate over 7,000 acres in the city area.

Livestock breeding is also important for the rural people as the agriculture. Financial and material assistance have been provided to farmers under various programs for peasants to take part in farming business as well. Nay Pyi Taw provided a capital of Ks 90 million for 370 households in Pinyinmana, Ottarathiri and Zeyathiri townships to earn extra income through permanent breeding farms.

In the education sector, the government allotted over Ks 5.4 billion for 234 programs in the eight townships of the city during the first year, and allotted over Ks 6 billion for 135 programs in the eight townships of the city during the second year. The number of high, middle and primary schools the government upgraded in academic year 2017-2018 in the city area reached 96 and the government also appointed over 420 new teachers. It is preparing to appoint 265 more teachers in the academic year 2018-2019.

The government spent over Ks 6.3 billion in this fiscal year for the health sector alone. It has implemented health undertakings at a cost of over Ks 2.7 billion. The works totaling over 130 included extension of new buildings, school health undertakings, and rural health activities.

The government reinforced its activities in providing health teams comprising specialist surgeons for rural areas in eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw this year. It had launched such activities in the previous year also. The health teams included general practitioners, child specialists, malaria specialists, leprosy specialists, surgeons and dentists.

The government could further upgrade the disease prevention measures as its main health activity in the two-year period. It could administer vaccine to over 17000 children and over 17000 expectant mothers in the first year and give vaccine to over 18000 children and over 18000 expectant mothers in the second year. It also gave vaccine to nearly 300,000 children in Nay Pyi Taw.

During its first year in office, the government implemented four specialist hospitals – gynecology specialist hospital, child specialist hospital, bone specialist hospital and eye specialist hospital. It also implemented a special hospital level dental hospital for the first time in the nation. The hospitals are giving treatment to people from all over the country.

The 1000-bed General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw has been equipped with modern facilities, medicines and skilled staff to treat people from far and near. The hospitals in Nay Pyi Taw is conducting medical checks on cancer free of charge to everyone.

Zabuthiri Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw is a government-private joint-venture providing medical treatment with the most advanced equipment and methods charging only 75 per cent of the actual cost.

The government upgraded the meat and fish stalls of Thabyaygon market in Nay Pyi Taw at the cost of nearly Ks 1 billion in cooperation with the People's Republic of China. It also created a neat and tidy place for vendors in Tatkon.

The government spent nearly Ks 7 billion in implementing 168 rural water supply projects in the first year and spent Ks 1.4 billion in implementing 175 rural water supply projects in the second year. It is adopting special plans for rural areas where water is insufficient.

In the past of the eight townships of Nay Pyi Taw only Zabuthiri had the cent-per-cent rural power supply. Now



Chairman Dr Myo Aung observing while cardiologists treating patient who suffer from heart problems. **PHOTO: MNA**



Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung provides assistance to households. **PHOTO: MNA**

all the villages in Zeyathiri Township has been electrified. This year alone, the government spent over Ks 4 billion in implementing 86 more power supply projects in the remaining townships.

The government has been opening OSS offices all around the country to serve the public in various places. These officers had solved or settled over 60,000 public complaints or problems through amicable and smooth services within a two-year period. Talks of courses on subjects related to vocation education or drug awareness have been given in various parts of the city area.

The main aim is to turn Nay Pyi Taw into a constantly clean and green city where all-round development undertakings are free from damaging the environment.

The Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee is developing the capital city as a sector of its tasks. The committee is accepting funds from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and government financial support and from its own budget in greening the city, implementing water works and sanitation plans,

building and maintaining roads and bridges and other necessary facilities.

The government has created 120 500-ft by 500-ft plots in the diplomatic zone of the capital city. Three plots have already been hired and 12 countries have already chosen 27 plots for them. The

country has the draft agreement with Qatar and it has been approved. So work is under way to hire land under agreement. The zone now has 12 24-ft wide streets, facilities for water and power supply. Work is being made under the amended 16-point policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the embassies to move to the diplomatic zone.

“We now have already adopted a future plan for development of Nay Pyi Taw. We will implement the plan in cooperation with the relevant ministries. We have a five-point policy. The main aim is to turn Nay Pyi Taw into a constantly clean and green city where all-round development undertakings are free from damaging the environment. As Nay Pyi Taw is the capital of the country and the seat of the government it will host only small-scale industries and no heavy industries will be allowed. It will become a smart city which is the centre of knowledge of the country,” said Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Myo Aung.

In addition, there are economic development undertakings of the city. One of the advantages of Nay Pyi Taw is its possession of an international airport. The number of passengers coming through the airport is still small at present. But it will become a vital place and a transit centre of Asia when the city becomes the centre of knowledge where development of intellectual property is high.

The government is working together with the donors in looking into the social needs of the public and solving the hardships of the citizens of the city. In some cases, the departmental staffs are providing one stop or door-to-door services for the satisfaction of the local people.

The Nay Pyi Taw Council has been working for ensuring security, progress, cleanness and pleasantness of the people living in the city. It is also striving to further improve the living standards of the people. Additionally its endeavours include education development, health and longevity, roads and bridges development, maintenance of dam for good irrigation, and uninterrupted supply of electricity. In so doing, the council is striving with best efforts depending on the allotted budget.

Translation TMT

People over policy

IT was reassuring to hear President U Win Myint speak about his support for ordinary Myanmar citizens such as civil servants, farmers and students and to address human rights abuses.

Too often, politicians speak in general terms about policy, vision, hopes and dreams. But his speech yesterday had ordinary citizens in mind, those who are usually ignored, or who have their basic rights violated, such as detainees and prisoners.

In his New Year address, U Win Myint stressed that hard-working civil servants will be taken care of even after they retire.

"Among our civil service personnel who are still in active service, there are some who do not have proper housing. I have also noticed that a great number of civil service personnel after retirement are suffering greatly because they do not have housing. That is why our Union Government will work hard on a priority basis so that civil service personnel will have at least a house or an apartment and live in dignity by the time they retire", U Win Myint said in his New Year's speech yesterday.

For farmers whose rights to their land have been previously trampled upon, the President expressed support.

I have already met the Human Rights Commission members and have given instructions to ensure that citizens do not lose their inalienable rights, in other words their fundamental rights. The organizations themselves which are working in the area of human rights should take extra care not to trample upon the fundamental rights and dignity of any individual and to act fairly in accordance with the law", he said in his speech yesterday.

For farmers whose rights to their land have been previously trampled upon, the President expressed support.

"I will work for the return of farmlands confiscated illegally and to ensure that compensation has been given, in close consultation with various States/Regional governments based on the findings, remarks and opinions of different levels of committees, formed for the review of farmlands and other lands", the President said.

Perhaps of greater importance, the President yesterday pledged his support for students, the future of the country, who will contribute their efforts towards building a stable Democratic Federal Republic with a thriving economy.

"We will focus and work towards having more students in the professional disciplines. Providing opportunities to students from low-income families and poor families to pursue higher education will soon become an important policy for the State. We have to work to ensure that students with abilities get the opportunity to pursue the disciplines for which they qualify. To ensure they get the positions they deserve, we need to improve ways and means for them to study abroad or at home".

As the President noted yesterday in his speech, the march for reform needs to begin with the country's people, "who are the original owners of sovereign power". ■

Let's strive for forest products export to rise again

By Myint Maung Soe

MYANMAR has been recognised for producing valuable hardwood for the world's timber trading, due to its favourable weather conditions and natural resources. Teak is the most valuable wood in the world, and Myanmar is regarded as the home of teak production.

The following are some excerpts from interviews with the officials concerned.

U Win Myint, Director of Trade Promotion Department

Forest product is an industry which can attract foreign cur-



cy and employment opportunities besides promoting GDP for the country. It was also listed in the National Strategy and there are hundreds of saw mills and other related factories across the country. Forest product plays a vital role in the export sector and has reached US\$1.2 billion in 2007. Nevertheless we can still export these forest products to foreign countries due to our natural resources, climate condition



and environment. Also there still remains a few forest products which cannot be exported such as raw logs and finished timber products to the foreign countries. Therefore we are going to develop the production as a sector-wide approach. As for our department, plans are underway to improve the process of logging timbers and finding new markets so that illegal logging will be completely wiped out in the country.

U Khin Maung Aye, Chairman of Central Cooperative Society

Forest products are one of Myanmar's treasures, and anything included among forest products is valuable, whether they are animals or plants. We used to export logging timbers and at present, we handle manufacturing and logging activities which are a combination of sculptors and technology. We should

find ways and means to sell our products in the world markets.

Myanmar produces teak, hardwood and Gum-Kino trees, which are world-renowned products. Another rare species of pine tree have grown only along the Myanmar-China borders. These trees had been planted in Putao region over thousands of years. Unfortunately, these trees no longer grow in this area, but some roots remain underground. We

have been conducting to dig these rare pine trees for eight years. You can see many sculptures made of rare pine trees in the living rooms of houses in China. They value most these sculptures and we will try to produce these rare pine trees as a value-added products when the transportation system is good.

Many big trees in Myanmar had fallen down during the Cyclone Nargis. We can produce them as a valuable treasure with the combination of technology and innovation. Our Shwe Pyi Resort is situated in Bago and it is set on a 100-acre compound with many sculptures. Moreover we are trying to be listed in the world's record with the aim of displaying a variety of sculptures from Myanmar. The government should encourage developing value-added forest products and relax some strict

regulation which can be prevented from illegal timber trading.

U Aye Lwin, Chairman of ASEAN Furniture Council

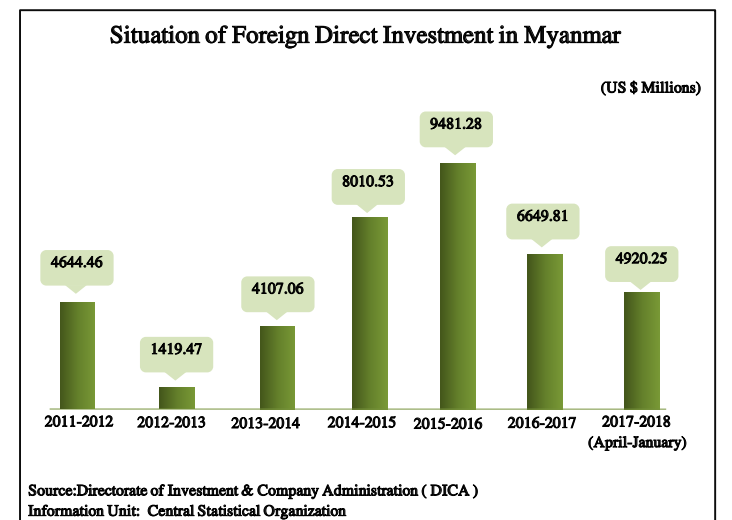
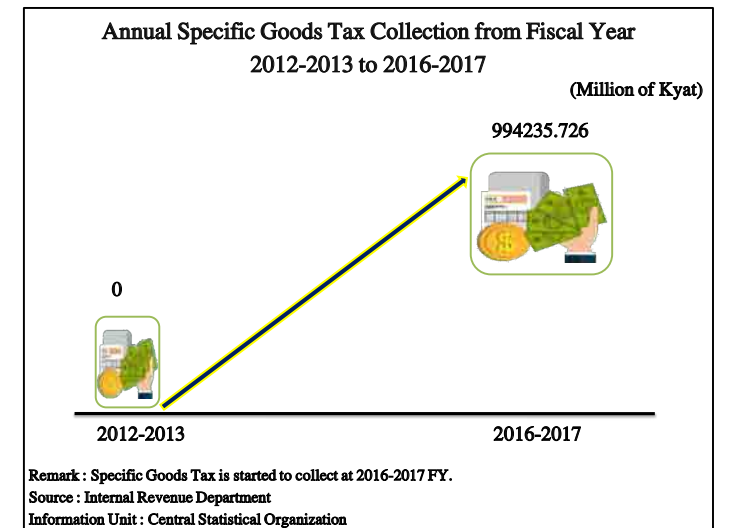
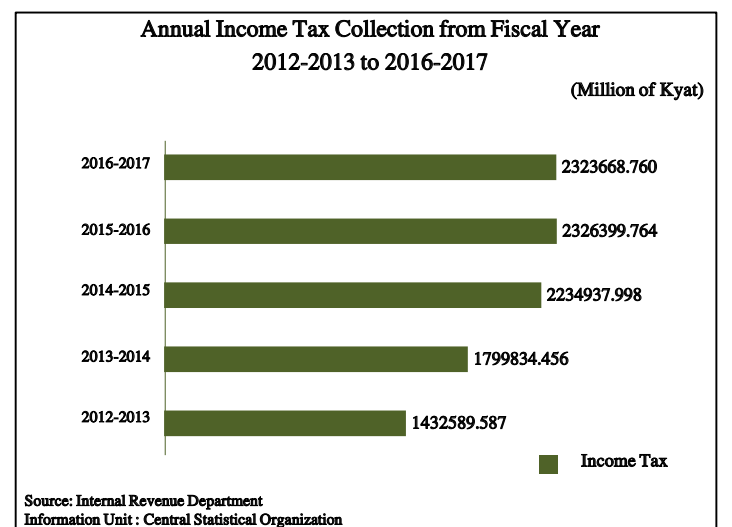
Forests have long played an integral role in the development of national economies. The Ministry of Forestry had earned \$300 million annually from exporting logging timbers. The export volumes have risen from \$500 million to \$1 billion in 1997. According to the data, 90 per cent of export earnings were from raw logs and finished logging products. Our country has managed to earn up to \$500 million while other ASEAN coun-



tries could earn \$2 billion or \$3 billion annually. That's why I'd like to request the government to relax some undesirable rules and regulations for the benefits of the people and the state; to encourage wood-based industry and increase job opportunities for the people; to reinforce rules of laws for the people who live in the legal-fold; to support financial aids for the businessmen and to take action against some businessmen who violate the rules.

Forest products remains as an important source of foreign exchange in the country and co-operation is of great importance to maintain the sustainable development of Myanmar's forests, therefore effective approaches should be made to get benefits to the industry and economy in Myanmar. ■

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung



Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their works to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Real name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar news office

Myanmar New Year Greetings of Vice-Presidents, Hluttaw Speakers, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and Cardinal Charles Bo

Vice President U Myint Swe's New Year Message

On the occasion of the Myanmar New Year, I send greetings and good wishes for the good health and auspiciousness of all ethnic nationalities living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

For the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to be stable and peaceful and in striving toward the firm establishment of a democracy system, everyone, including ethnic nationals, is urged to work together in unity with the government, play their respective parts based on ethnic national spirit, love for the country and with collective strength.

May all ethnic national brethren be well and happy on the New Year.



ME 1380 Myanmar New Year greeting from Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat

The old year has ended and a new year has begun. The old system has been changed to a new system. We are amending or repealing laws that are not in accord with the new era and system. At the same time the Hluttaw is enacting laws that benefit the people, protect their basic human rights, providing for both physical and mental security. We will exert our mental and physical efforts to the utmost to fulfill the duties assigned to us by the people.

May the people also cooperate and participate with the Hluttaw in establishing a democracy federal union. May they enjoy the full human rights and achieve the full benefit of unity and peace. May



the Republic of the Union of Myanmar be peaceful and become developed. May the people be happy and well on the occasion of the New Year.

Cardinal Charles Maung Bo sends wishes for Myanmar New Year

Esteemed brothers and sisters, Thingyan and cool fresh water, Padauk flowers filling the landscape, always go hand in hand. Just as the cool fresh water of the New Year cools us down in the summer heat, this also symbolizes the attainment of peace amidst the flaming fires of anger.

The cool fresh water of the New Year symbolizes Unity.

No matter how different the Chindwin, Kaladan, Ayeyawady, Sittaung, Thanlwin, and Taninthayi rivers may be, they all flow into the ocean and become one entity and one color.

Likewise, the cool fresh water of the New Year does not discriminate the color of skin or religion, but unifies the people. The cool fresh water of the New Year has the power to cleanse us. It symbolizes the ability to purify us both physically as well as spiritually. It also portrays forgiveness.

We should thus enter into the New Year forgiving all harms and transgressions inflicted upon us with renewed spirits and bodies into a new world.

This cup of cool fresh water of the



Vice President U Henry Van Thio's New Year Message

May all the people and ethnic nationals of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar be joyful on the occasion of the Myanmar New Year.

A peaceful and developed federal union is to be constructed through the collective strength of the ethnic brethren born in the union with friendship, mutual support, mutual assistance, mutual respect and mutual understanding based on union spirit. Collective strength is the main force that can face and overcome all obstacles.

Dear beloved, respected and parent like people and ethnic nationals,

May there be auspiciousness from this occasion of the Myanmar New Year and throughout the whole life and may your lives be full of happiness. May you



face and overcome all difficulties with renewed strength in both body and mind. May all damaging fires be doused and may you all have eternal peace.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker's Myanmar New Year message

On the occasion of the Myanmar New Year, may all ethnic national brothers and sisters in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and abroad be well both physically and mentally. May they be at peace and happy on the occasion of the Myanmar New Year.

On the occurrence of the New Year, people are to take lessons from the troubles, difficulties, strength, weaknesses and challenges faced in the past year. The people and ethnic nationals of the country are to unite in friendship to achieve a better future, new opportunities for success in the coming year with fresh body, mind and strength.

With the aim toward benefiting the people, the parliaments are drawing up and enacting laws for peace, rule of law and national reconciliation, and to amend or repeal laws that are not in harmony with the time and the system.

In doing this, I pledge that our legislative pillar, the parliaments, will provide check and balance to the administrative and judicial sectors in the best possible ways so that it becomes stronger and effective, are in accordance to the norms



of the democracy and is of benefit to the people and the country.

May the federal democracy union be established with the collective strength of the people and the ethnic nationals. May the citizens of Myanmar have a prosperous and peaceful life on the occasion of the New Year. May the suspicions and hatred cease and egoistic prides be discarded. May they follow the true teachings of their religions.

New Year Message by Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

I send this message of greetings with good wishes for all Myanmar nationals living in the country and abroad to have peace of mind and good health in the New Year. During the year 1379, people went through many experiences, including some changes. Let us all renew our strength this New Year to overcome the weariness of going through the past year. Let us all be happy and make merit together. And from thence may we all be able to do better and achieve more progress in 1380.



Maungtaw pays respects to elderly



The congregation led by Maungtaw District Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut pay respect to the elderly persons at Sasana Beikman in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: TIN SOE**

MAUNGTAW Town held the 41st ceremony to pay respects to the elderly at Sasana Beikman in Maungtaw Town, Rakhine State, yesterday morning.

Maungtaw District Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut and the ceremony's Organising Committee Vice Chairman U Aung San Thein first delivered the speeches.

Next, they paid respects to the elderly and recited an homage poem. Later, an elderly person delivered the words of thanks on behalf of the elders.

The district/township level departmental officials, responsible persons, the Red Cross, civil society organisations, philanthropic organisations

and town elders then provided offertories to the attending elderly persons. Of the 126 elders who are above 80 in Maungtaw Township, 93 attended the ceremony. After the ceremony, officials went to the homes of the elders who were unable to attend the ceremony and provided the offertories directly to them.— Aung Kyaw Oo ■

Rakhine traditional water festival kicks off

THE Rakhine traditional water festival, which will be celebrated for three days from 17 to 19 April, kicked off yesterday.

A ceremony to open the Rakhine traditional water festival at the central pandal in Maungtaw was held at Myoma (east) Ward in Maungtaw Town.

At the event, Maungtaw District Management Committee Chairman Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut delivered the New Year's greetings. Western Command Commander Brigadier General Soe Tint Naing, No (15) Mobile Operation Command Brigadier General Khin Maung Soe, Police Brigadier General Myint Toe, Maungtaw District Management Committee Chairman Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut, Township Management Committee Chairman U Myint Khaing, a Rakhine State Hluttaw representative and a town elder then cut the ceremonial ribbon to



Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut sprinkles with scented water to Rakhine traditional dancers at the Rakhine traditional water festival in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: MAUNGTAW DISTRICT IPRD**

open the central pandal.

Later, departmental officials and a few invited foreigners from Maungtaw-based international non-governmental organisations sprinkled with scented water, while Rakhine traditional dancers entertained with classical Thingyan songs

and dances. The Rakhine traditional water festival is being celebrated for nearly 80 years now. A music band is included this year, with entertainment being provided by well-known performers and popular Rakhine singers. — Maungtaw District IPRD

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order No. 16/2018
3rd Waxing of Kason, 1380 ME
(17 April, 2018)

Order to abolish rules for political cases set under Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code

Prisoners who were serving jail terms for political cases in various correctional facilities across the country have been given unconditional amnesty under the Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and the rules set under the above section of the Criminal Procedure Code have been abolished as from the date when this order was announced.

Sd/Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order No. 17/2018
3rd Waxing of Kason, 1380 ME
(17 April, 2018)

Amnesty Order

As a gesture of marking the Myanmar New Year, to ensure the peace of mind of the people and taking into consideration the humanitarian concerns, 8,490 prisoners serving jail terms in various correctional facilities across the country have been given unconditional amnesty today under the Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Sd/Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order No. 18/2018
3rd Waxing of Kason, 1380 ME
(17 April, 2018)

Amnesty Order

As a gesture of marking the Myanmar New Year and with a view to maintaining friendship with other countries and taking into consideration the humanitarian concerns, 51 foreign prisoners serving jail terms in various correctional facilities across the country have been given unconditional amnesty and expelled today under the Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code..

Sd/Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Paritta recitation, merit making on New Year Day in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Myanmar people marked the end of Myanmar Era (ME) 1379 and the start of 1380 with an auspicious ceremony yesterday.

It is Myanmar tradition to wash away the dirt of the old year from the body with Thingyan water, while the dirt in the mind is washed away through merit making on New Year's Day.

The New Year's Day of ME 1380 started with people keeping the Sabbath in pagodas and monasteries, caring for personal hygiene of the elderly, paying respects to the elders, the Jivitadana donation of releasing animals from harm or captivity and other merit makings.

In Nay Pyi Taw, Sabbath keepers flocked to pagodas and monasteries, sayadaws and sanghas recited Paritta and the

crowd conducted donations, including Jivitadana donations.

In the morning, the 10th Paritta recitation ceremony to exorcise evil spirits and bad omens was held at the Cave of Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw, where pilgrims and audience took the Nine Precepts and listened to the sermons and recitation of Paritta delivered by the Sayadaws and Buddhist monks, led by Pyinmana Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara, who is the Ovadacariya (patron) of Uppatasanti Pagoda board of trustee. Present at the occasion were Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and wife, Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo and wife,

Nay Pyi Taw Council members, members of the pagoda board of trustees, and members and staff of religious organisations. Later, the union minister and officials provided offertories to the Sayadaw and sanghas.

Later, the Sayadaw and monks recited Paritta in the Nay Pyi Taw Council area in a helicopter to repel imminent dangers and drive away evil spirits on the auspicious occasion of the New Year, sending Metta (loving kindness), and then, the sacred waters were sprayed aerially.

Similarly, famous pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw Council area such as Satta Sattaha Pagoda, Maha Sakya Ranthi Pagoda, Datu Jaya Datupaungsu Pagoda, Ko Kham Pagoda, Loka Marazein Pagoda, Yan Aung Myin Pagoda were



Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and wife donate offertories to Sayadaw in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

crowded with people keeping Sabbath, merit makers making food donations and Jivitadana donation.

In the ministries, Dhammayones, wards and housing

apartments of public servants in Nay Pyi Taw, sayadaws, sanghas and monks were invited to recite Parittas and offerings of food and donations were made. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Myanmar strongly objects use of such words as “ethnic cleansing” or “genocide” in reference to the situation in Rakhine State: Permanent Representative to UN

Myanmar's Permanent Representative to UN spoke on Myanmar's efforts in prevention of sexual violence and measures taken to address the issue at the United Nations Security Council's open debate on Women, Peace and Security: “Preventing sexual violence in conflict through empowerment, gender equality and access to justice” at the United Nations Headquarters on 16 April 2018.

SPEAKING at the debate, Permanent Representative of Myanmar, Ambassador U Hau Do Suan explained Myanmar's position of preventing and addressing conflict – related sexual violence by taking further steps to cooperate with the United Nations. With regard to the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict related Sexual Violence, he said that the report acknowledges important steps taken by Myanmar to protect the rights of women and children. However, it is most regrettable that the Tatmadaw has been listed in the annex of the report despite Myanmar's genuine efforts to engage constructively with the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC). Besides, the decision of the listing was made based on unverified allegations in spite of our attempts to interview the alleged victims in the camps

of Cox's Bazar to investigate the cases. However, we are disappointed that our request for proper investigations had been denied.

With regard to the alleged sexual violence as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the Government of Myanmar has made its position very clear that it will not condone any human rights abuse. If there is concrete evidence, we are ready to take action against any perpetrator in accordance with the law without impunity. The recent sentencing of seven military personnel to 10 years in prison with hard labour who were involved in the Inn Din incident, is a clear demonstration of the Government's strong commitment to the rule of law. Myanmar delegation categorically rejects the groundless accusations that sexual violence had been used as a strategy to force the Muslim people to flee their homes.

In Myanmar, sexual violence is crime strongly abhorred by our traditional values, and strictly forbidden by law and its culture. Myanmar delegation stressed that the members of the armed forces are subject not only to the Military Act of 1959 and Military by-laws, but also to the existing civilian laws and traditions. As such, severe legal action is taken against perpetrators, be they civilian or member of security forces. There were a number of evidences of prosecutions of military personnel for committing sexual violence.

Members of the armed forces have been clearly instructed to strictly follow Military Code of Conduct and not to involve in crimes including sexual violence. A series of capacity building workshops were held to educate military personnel on human rights. The curriculums of the military training schools include teaching of law related to prevention of sexual violence.

Myanmar strongly objects the use of such words as “ethnic cleansing” or “genocide” in reference to the situation in Rakhine State. Such irresponsible accusations based on unsubstantiated, one-sided allegations, fake news and tempered reports for political purpose, will only exacerbate the current situation and will lead to further polarization of different communities in the region.

He said such incessant rhetoric against Myanmar will only impact negatively on the existing cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations, as well as the on-going bilateral cooperation with Bangladesh in the efforts to find a lasting solution to the current humanitarian problem as well as the complex situation in Rakhine.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador U Hau Do Suan also reminded that as we all condemn conflict-relat-



Ambassador U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to UN

ed sexual violence, we should also deplore the exploitation of this sensitive issue by certain groups as a tool to achieve their own political goal. The problem of sexual violence cannot be resolved through naming and blaming. The international community must take a constructive approach through sharing of information of violations and assisting the member states in their efforts to address the issue.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Myanmar New Year greetings of Rector Sayadaw, prominent persons

Rector Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Nanda Mala Bivamsa

In the New Year of 1380, everyone should try to have a new outlook on life. Get rid of bad habits from the previous year and adopt good habits to create a new life.

The Buddha has left some teachings for starting a new life:

1. I shall not harm other people' I shall wish for their prosperity.
2. I shall not be envious of others' accomplishments; I shall be joyous for them.
3. I shall not trick or manipulate other people; I shall be free from deceit and be honest.



Hanthawady U Ohn Kyaing, veteran Journalist

"We saw our new president's commitment to development of the media sector, or the 'Fourth Pillar' of the country, in his inaugural speech on 30 March. We, on behalf of the members of our journalists' world, welcome his commitment. Also, I wish success of the 3rd session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong."



Interfaith Group sends wishes for New Year



U Aung Naing, General Manager of Interfaith Friendship and Unity Group

It is an auspicious occasion that Myanmar, with 90 per cent of its inhabitants being Buddhists, celebrates her New Year together with all races and religions. I wish for peace and wellness of mind, and happiness for everyone every day.

U Hla Maung, Retired Ambassador (Patron of Interfaith Friendship and Unity Group)

Myanmar's tradition encourages people to have compassion and understanding for each other as the old year gives way for the New Year. I wish for everyone's wishes for Myanmar to be fulfilled in the New Year. I also wish for the swift arrival of internal peace for our ethnic brethren in the coming year. I wish for all ethnics and all religions to be united with compassion in the coming year so



that there will be peace and stability in the country which will lead us to a modern, developed democratic defederal union in the future.

Prof. Dr. Aung Tun Thet, Chief Coordinator of UEHRD

Everyone looks forward to the New Year with high hopes. Everyone wishes to overcome their challenges and difficulties in the New Year, whether they be an individual, an organization, or as a country. Our country is currently undergoing political changes and the most important thing right now is lasting peace. As equally important as peace is economic development. Development and peace grow parallel. There needs to be understanding, patience, and forgiveness for this. I have trust in people and hope that they will do



the right thing. Everyone will have hopes and dreams for the New Year. I wish for those hopes and dreams to be fulfilled and for Myanmar's future to be bright. May the poor become rich and the weak become strong.



U Phyo Wai Yazar (Managing Director of Diethelm Travel Myanmar)

I wish for an auspicious MR 1380 Myanmar New Year for all Myanmar citizens. I wish for everyone to take all the experiences from the previous year and use them to become better economically, socially, and politically among many other sectors.



U Zaw Min Win, President of the Republic of the UMFCFI

"I wish for development of economy, peace and happiness that the people yearned for, while we, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry is striving to join hands with the Government for the development of the private sector."

Dr. Thet Thet Zin (Chairperson of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation)

It is nature that the old year makes way for the New Year. This year witnesses ME 1379 advance to ME 1380 of the Myanmar Calendar. Our country has developed with each passing year and has overcome many challenges along the way. The Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation has also accomplished much for women to be inclusive in the country's development process. In the New Year we will continue working for women's development in states, regions, districts, townships, wards, and villages. I wish for all the women and citizens of the country an auspicious New Year.



U Min Han (Chairman of Myanmar Printers and Publishers Association)

May all Myanmar citizens have an auspicious New Year filled with peace of mind and good health. May there be socio-economic development, union peace and full protection granted by the law. On behalf of the Myanmar Printers and Publishers Association, I wish for every citizen to be capable of contributing to the nation's development no matter how small it may be.



U Ye Min Aung (Vice-Chairman of UMFCFI)

I wish for happiness, peace, and safety of the citizens, the farmers and the fishermen who make up most of the population. Exports of rice and fishery products have increased from last year. I wish for high exports and increased quality of products for the farmers in this year as well and for them and the government to collaborate together in this endeavour.

Eva Longoria gets star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES—Eva Longoria, best known for her role in the TV series “Desperate Housewives,” got a star on Hollywood’s Walk of Fame on Monday, in an event hailed by the Latino community.

“Representation matters. So every time there’s another Latino on this Walk of Fame, it’s another win for a whole community,” the 43-year-old actress from a Texas family tracing its roots to Mexico told AFP.

Longoria received the honor in the presence of her husband, former Televisa chairman Jose Baston. They

are expecting their first child in May.

Celebrities such as Ricky Martin, Victoria Beckham and actresses Felicity Huffman and Anna Faris also attended the ceremony.

“It’s really important for me to be here, for people to come and see the star, and know that you can do it with a lot of hard work,” said Longoria.

In the romantic comedy “Overboard,” set for release next month, Longoria plays the best friend of a single mother struggling to make ends meet.—AFP ■



Eva Longoria poses on her just-unveiled star on Hollywood’s Walk of Fame. **PHOTO: AFP**



Hip-hop superstar Drake is teasing a new album — without providing an exact release date or other details. **PHOTO: AFP**

Drake, reigning on singles chart, announces album

NEWYORK—Hip-hop superstar Drake teased a new album on Monday, all but certain to prove a major commercial success as he dethroned himself on top of the singles chart.

The Toronto artist posted on Instagram a picture of himself with his back to the camera sporting a jacket that read “Scorpion” and “June 2018.”

Drake, who separately put out a picture of a necklace with a scorpion pendant, did not reveal

an exact release date or other details. He has often played with the traditional album format, instead putting out sprawling song collections marketed as mixtapes.

But one consistency in his prodigious output has been commercial achievement.

His song “God’s Plan” topped the US singles chart for 11 weeks — until being dethroned on Monday by another of his songs, “Nice for What.”

His latest song was

streamed in the United States more than 60 million times and downloaded 88,000 times in the week through Thursday, tracking service Nielsen Music said.

Drake, 31, has roots as a rapper but has increasingly gone in a pop direction and incorporated the infectious beats of Jamaican dancehall, most notably on his hit “One Dance,” which is the second most-streamed song ever on Spotify.—AFP ■

South Korean actress once kidnapped to North dies at 91

SEOUL—A South Korean actress who was once kidnapped by the North’s agents on the orders of leader Kim Jong Un’s late father and forced to make movies for the regime has died aged 91, her family said.

Choi Eun-hee was the South’s most famous actress for decades before being brazenly abducted by North Korean spies in Hong Kong in 1978 at the request of the North’s then leader-in-waiting Kim Jong Il, an avid film fan.

During her visit to Hong Kong to meet a potential investor in her arts school, she was reportedly lured onto a boat by her guide before being transferred against her will to a cargo ship destined for North Korea.

Her husband Shin Sang-ok, a top director, was taken to the North soon after, although circumstances over his alleged

abduction remain unclear.

Choi remained trapped in the North for eight years, where the two made more than 10 films together under the instruction of Kim Jong Il.

In a 2011 interview, Choi said Kim “respected us as artists and fully supported us,” but that she could never forgive him for the “outrageous and unforgivable” kidnapping.

They were allowed to make “films with artistic values, instead of just propaganda films extolling the regime,” Choi said, but always longed for their freedom.

During their ordeal, the couple travelled overseas extensively for movie production missions and to attend film festivals—always under heavy surveillance by the North’s agents.

Choi even won the best actress award at the Moscow International Film Festival in



Choi Eun-hee was the South’s most famous actress for decades before being abducted by North Korean spies in Hong Kong in 1978. **PHOTO: AFP**

1985 for her role in “Salt”—a film about Korean guerrillas fighting against the 1910-45 Japanese colonial rule.

The couple—who had divorced in 1976, before their abductions — remarried during a

trip to Hungary at Kim’s urging.

But they finally staged a daring escape to the US embassy in Vienna after attending the Berlinale film festival in 1986, and sought asylum in the US due to fear for their personal

security.

The couple returned to the South in 1999 after spending more than a decade in the US. They remained married until Shin’s death in 2006.

Their dramatic life inspired several books and movies.

Choi, who made her cinematic debut in 1942, had risen to stardom in the wake of the 1950-53 Korean War that sealed the division between the communist North and the capitalist South.

She was called the “queen” of South Korean cinema from the 1950s to the 1970s while appearing in more than 100 movies—many made by Shin.

North Korea abducted hundreds of South Koreans under a state-sanctioned policy in the decades following the Korean War.

Choi’s funeral will be held in Seoul on Thursday.—AFP ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

**Have a joyful Thingyan Festival and
an auspicious New Year, 1380 M.E.**



The Global New Light of Myanmar sends its best wishes to our valued readers, distributors, advertisers, media agencies and all the people of Myanmar for good health, happiness, and success. May you be greeted every day with auspiciousness in the New Year, 1380 M.E.



De Bruyne eyes golden era for champs City

LONDON—Kevin De Bruyne says Manchester City are ready to reign supreme in the Premier League for years to come under the astute leadership of Pep Guardiola.

City were confirmed as English champions on Sunday with a record-equalling five games to spare after Manchester United crashed to a shock 1-0 defeat against struggling West Bromwich Albion.

Belgium midfielder De Bruyne has been one of the standout players in City's record-breaking campaign, but he knows Guardiola was the mastermind behind their triumph.

City's top priority in the close-season will be securing the services of former Bayern Munich and Barcelona chief Guardiola, who also led his team to League Cup glory in Febru-

ary, for longer than the one year remaining on his contract.

"Everyone knows he's one of the best coaches in the world. To achieve what he has achieved in the game is special and to be part of a group of players led by him can only help us to keep developing," De Bruyne said.

"He came in two years ago and changed the way we play. That obviously takes time to adapt to but we've developed together and this season is a reward for all that work.

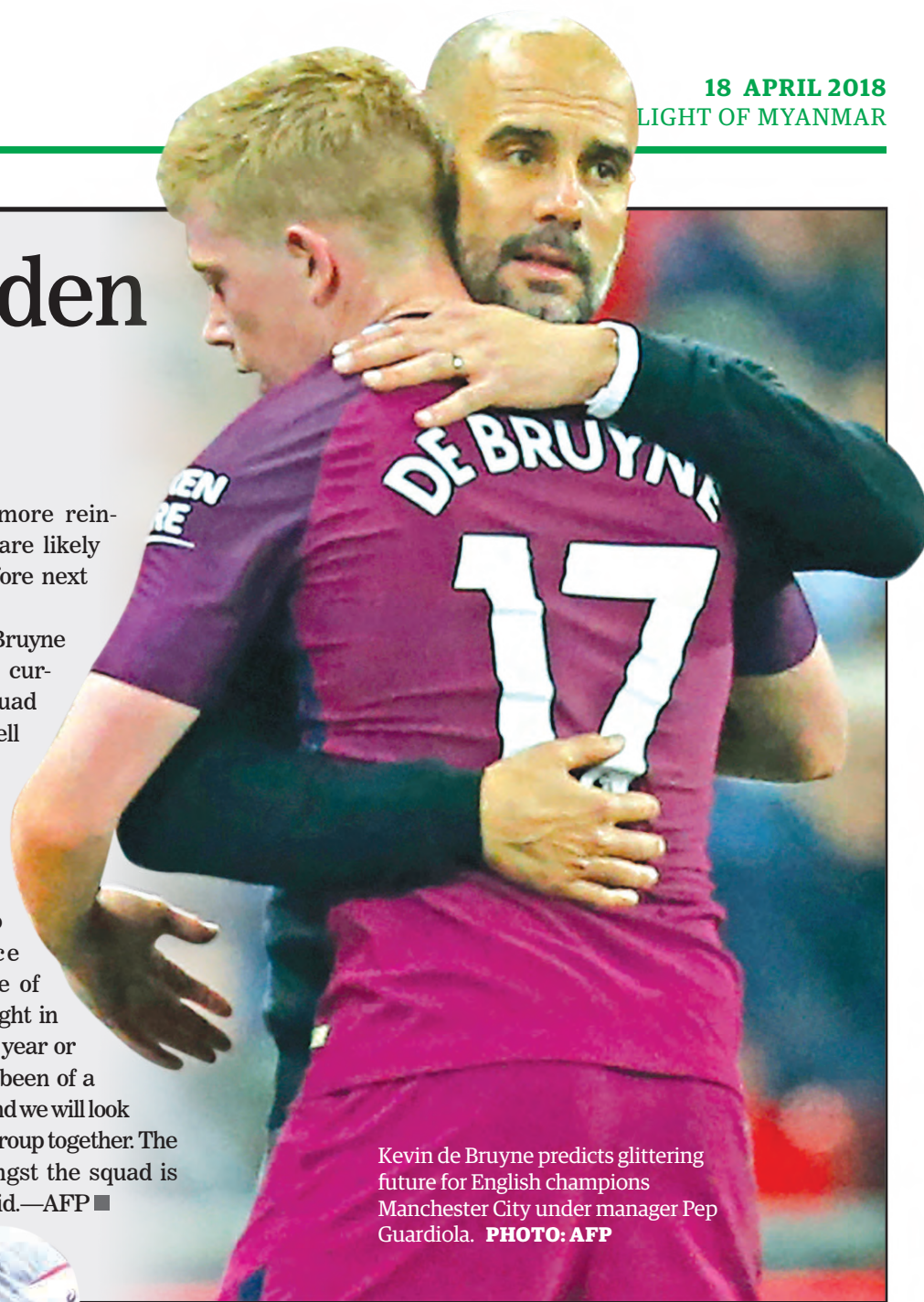
"What we want to do now is continue playing the way we have this season and become even stronger. He's a big part of that and hopefully these can be his first trophies of many here at City."

Backed by City's Abu Dhabi-based owners, Guardiola has spent big money to bolster his

squad and more reinforcements are likely to arrive before next season.

But De Bruyne believes the current City squad is already well placed to build on this season's achievements.

"It's no coincidence that the type of players brought in over the last year or two have all been of a similar age and we will look to build as a group together. The feeling amongst the squad is great," he said.—AFP ■



Kevin de Bruyne predicts glittering future for English champions Manchester City under manager Pep Guardiola. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kawauchi becomes 1st Japanese runner to win Boston Marathon since 1987

BOSTON—Yuki Kawauchi became the first Japanese runner in 31 years to win the Boston Marathon after besting the men on Monday with a time of 2 hours, 15 minutes, 58 seconds to earn his first World Marathon major title.

Kawauchi endured the coldest start in 30 years, strong winds and heavy rain to overtake defending champion Geoffrey Kirui of Kenya in the last mile and cross the tape over two minutes in front at the 122nd running of the road race ending at Boston's Copley Square.

Kirui finished second in 2:18:23, and American Shadrack Bivott was third in 2:18:35.

"I just looked ahead. I just kept looking ahead and ran my best and that's how I won," Kawauchi said. "These were winning conditions for me. This is the happiest day since I started

running 26 years ago."

He became the first Japanese man to win since Toshihiko Seko in 1987, the year Kawauchi was born, and the ninth Japanese champion overall, with past winners including Morio Shigematsu in 1965 and Kenji Kimihara in 1966.

"I don't think anyone here thought I would win. This race proves that we never know what can happen in marathon," Kawauchi said.

The Saitama native, who has won over 30 marathons and is known as the "citizen runner" for his work in the prefectural government, was recognized by Guinness World Records last month for completing the highest number of marathons in under 2 hours and 20 minutes.—Kyodo News ■



Yuki Kawauchi approaches the 24 mile marker of the 2018 Boston Marathon. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Pochettino proud of Spurs success

LONDON—Mauricio Pochettino says he is proud that Tottenham have closed the gap on the Premier League's top clubs as he targets Champions League qualification for a third successive season.



Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino is eyeing the Champions League for the third straight season. **PHOTO: AFP**

Spurs, who face Brighton on Tuesday, are fourth in the table despite a lower financial outlay than their rivals and playing at Wembley while their new ground is built.

"In football it's about this, it is to be clear who you are and

then to try to maximise your potential," said Pochettino, whose side can still finish second in the table behind champions Manchester City.

"At Tottenham for us it is to be brave, to believe, to work hard, to work harder than other clubs that the people consider are at our level," said the Argentine.

He said Spurs had made big strides in recent years and were now consistently challenging at the top end of the Premier League table.

"Now we are there but I think for me the most important thing is that we are there with a completely different way, or different tools of course, to teams like City or Manchester United," he said.

"You can work unbelievably hard, you can have these ideas on football as a coach or a coaching staff," added Pochettino, whose side have 67 points, four fewer than Jose Mourinho's United, in second spot.—AFP ■